## REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-21 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 5, 14, 17, 18, and 21 are amended. Claims 1, 5, 14, and 18 are independent claims.

The amendment to Claim 17 is merely editorial in nature. Claim 21 has been amended to depend from independent Claim 14. Accordingly, Claim 21 now incorporates the features recited in Claim 14.

### Acknowledgement of Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has acknowledged the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 30, 2000. An initialed copy of the PTO-1449 has been received from the Examiner. No further action is necessary at this time.

### Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-8, 10, 11, 14, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,046,978 to Melnik (hereinafter Melnik). This rejection, insofar as it pertains to the presently pending claims, is respectfully traversed.

As amended, independent claims 1, 5, 14, and 18 each recites that a destination node for a forwarded message packet

does not require address information in addition to the counter reaching the trigger body in order to accept the message packet. Applicant respectfully submits that this feature is not taught by Melnik.

Melnik discloses a wireless multihop network, which is organized into multiple bands of wireless nodes. Melnik discloses that each band is comprised of nodes that are located the same number of hops from a control node. Melnik further teaches that each node is assigned to a chain of nodes for purposes of receiving and relaying packets. The logical address of each node identifies the chain to which it belongs.

Thus, in Melnik's system, packets are transmitted to destination nodes via the destination node's chain. Specifically, Melnik's packet contains a destination address comprising a plurality of segments, each segment uniquely identifying a node belonging to a particular band. Melnik also discloses that each packet includes a hop information field. This field includes the designated number of hops for the packet (first half of field) and a counter (second half of field).

In Melnik's network, when a node transmits a packet, each node in the subsequent band receives and processes the packet. This processing requires each node to increment the counter and compare it to the designated number of hops in the packet. If

the counter has not reached the designated number, the node compares its unique identifier (last K bits of its own logical address) with the corresponding segment in the packet's destination address to determine whether the node is in the same chain as the destination node. If the node's unique identifier matches the segment, the node will accept the packet and relay it to the next band. According to Melnik, when the counter reaches the designated number of hops, each node within that band compares its unique identifier with the relevant segment in the destination address -- the destination node is the one whose unique identifier matches.

Accordingly, Melnik discloses that a node will only accept a packet if two conditions are met: 1) the counter is less than or equal to the designated number of hops; and 2) a particular segment of the packet's destination address matches the unique identifier of the node. Accordingly, Melnik's destination node requires address information in addition to the counter reaching the designated number in order to accept the packet. Melnik therefore fails to anticipate independent claims 1, 5, 14, and 18.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 5, 14, and 18 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above. Further,

Applicant submits that claims 2-4 and 6-8 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on claims 1 and 5.

**Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

Claims 9, 12, 13, 15-17 and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Melnik. In these rejections, the Examiner makes various statements regarding modifications to Melnik that allegedly would have been obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art. Without conceding the validity of these statements, Applicant respectfully submits that none of the proposed modifications remedy the deficiencies of Melnik set forth above in connection with independent claims 1, 5, 14, and 18. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 9, 12, 13, 15-17 and 19-21 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on the above-mentioned independent claims.

**Conclusion**

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the prior art relied upon by the Examiner.

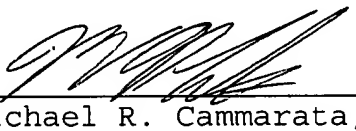
Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but to merely show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that any outstanding matters remain in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Jason W. Rhodes (Reg. No. 47,305), at the telephone number of (703) 205-8000, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
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